48 PAGES EVERY WEEK
ACTION
COMICS® WEEKLY
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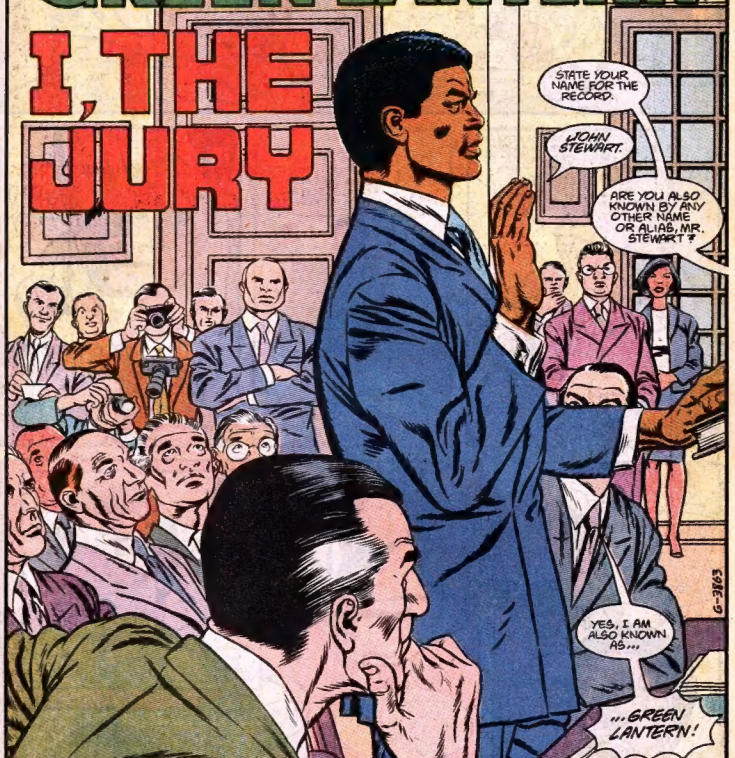
U.K. 60p
SHOWDOWN FOR WILDDOG
— PLUS —
DEADMAN
SECRET SIX
BLACKHAWK
GREEN LANTERN
SUPERMAN

# GREEN LANTERN®

# I, THE JURY

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MR. STEWART, WHILE WE UNDERSTAND YOUR APPEARANCE AT THIS INQUIRY IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY ON YOUR PART...
...IT IS THE CHAIR'S SINCEREST HOPE THAT YOU'RE NOT PLANNING TO FIFTH AMENDMENT US TO DEATH.
I'LL DO WHAT I CAN, SENATOR.
FINE. MR. STEWART, SOME WEEKS AGO AN AIR FORCE F-16 JET FIGHTER WAS SHOT OUT OF THE SKY. DAYS LATER, A COAST CITY PENTHOUSE APARTMENT AND OFFICE BUILDING WERE BOTH SEVERELY DAMAGED.
BOTH OF THESE INCIDENTS, SIR, HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO YOU BY EYEWITNESSES.
UH-HUH.
WE HAVE DEPOSITIONS FROM DOZENS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE INDICATED GREEN LANTERN'S PRESENCE AT EACH INCIDENT.
UH-HUH.
YOU ARE GREEN LANTERN, AREN'T YOU?
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG NUMBER, SENATOR. MAYBE FOLKS SPOTTED GREEN LANTERN AT THESE SCENES, BUT I KNOW THE PERSON ACTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS MESS IS...
"...STAR SAPPHIRE, QUEEN OF THE ZAMORANS!"
SHE'S A POWERFUL AND DEADLY PSYCHOTIC. THE POWER IN HER SAPPHIRE GEMSTONE RIVALS THAT OF THE LANTERN'S RING.
WASN'T ME. I WASN'T THERE.
COME AGAIN...?
SENATOR, I BURIED MY WIFE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.
STAR SAPPHIRE KILLED HER.
I'M SORRY, MR. STEWART, I DON'T KNOW WHO THIS "SAPPHIRE" WOMAN IS.
SHE'D COME GUNNING FOR GREEN LANTERN.
THE OTHER GREEN LANTERN.
I'M MORE CONCERNED WITH YOUR PARTICULAR INVOLVEMENT IN THESE INCIDENTS.
THE WHITE GUY.
1

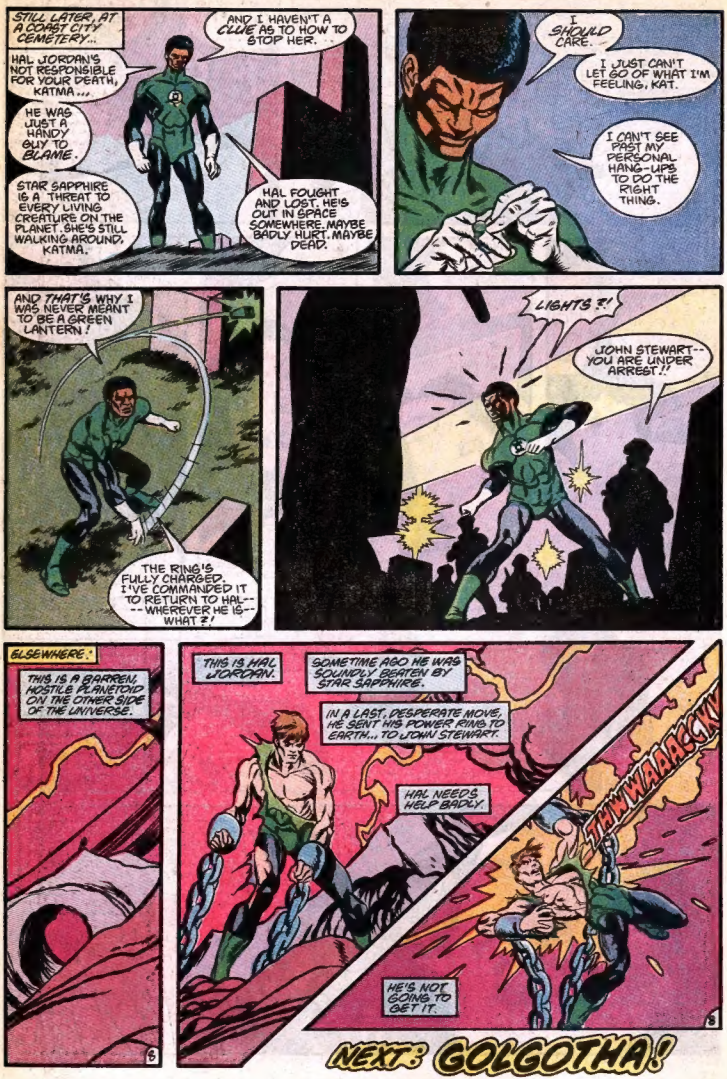
I WAS NEVER CHOSEN TO BE A GREEN LANTERN. I WAS A STANDBY.
WHENEVER THE REAL GREEN LANTERN WOULD BECOME INCAPACITATED...
... THE RING WOULD SEEK ME OUT, AND, I'D GO INTO ACTION!
I CHOSE TO GO PUBLIC, HENCE MY IDENTIFICATION AS "GREEN LANTERN." BUT, TRUST ME--
--YOU'RE TALKING TO THE WRONG GUY.
WAITAMINUTE. YOU'RE TELLING ME--
I DON'T HAVE A POWER RING. I'M NO LONGER A GREEN LANTERN, AND I'M CERTAINLY NOT A THREAT TO ANYONE.
THE MAN YOU WANT IS--
YES, YES... THE "WHITE GUY."
CAN YOU GIVE US THIS "WHITE GUY'S" NAME?
SORRY. DUDE WEARS A MASK. I CALLED HIM "YO."
HAVEN'T SEEN HIM IN WEEKS--
--EH?
HAL'S POWER RING?!
MR. STEWART, WE'RE PREPARED TO PRODUCE A WITNESS WHO WILL TESTIFY AS TO YOUR CULPABILITY IN THESE MATTERS!
HER PENTHOUSE WAS DESTROYED BY GREEN LANTERN...
... A "BLACK GUY," MR. STEWART.
3

MISS CAROL FERRIS...
CAROL F--
SHE'S...
...SHE'S...
...STAR SAPPHIRE!
SHE KILLED MY WIFE!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR PLAY IS, LADY!
I DON'T KNOW WHERE HAL IS, OR WHY I'VE NOW GOT HIS RING!
ALL I DO KNOW IS--
--IT'S PAYBACK TIME!!
H--HELP ME--!!
I'M GONNA STOP YOU BEFORE YOU KILL AGAIN!!
WHAT'S THE DEAL, WITCH? YOU WANNA WIPE OUT A ROOMFUL OF SENATORS NOW?!
M--MISTER STEWART--PLEASE--!!

P--PLEASE... SOMEONE... C-CAN'T BREATHE--!!
MR. STEWART-- STOP!!
NO WAY, SENATOR. THE LADY IS A KILLER! SHE PUTS ON A GOOD ACT.
I'M NOT CUTTING OFF HER OXYGEN!
--MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO!
WHUMMP
STAY BACK-- SHE CAN LEVEL THIS WHOLE BUILDING!!
SHE KILLED MY WIFE--
--DOWNED THAT JET--
--THREATENED THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS--!
SHE'S DEAD.
DEAD? NO, SHE CAN'T--
--I DIDN'T-- I WASN'T TRYING TO--
--OR WAS I?!
THE POWER RING WORKS ON WILL POWER-- COULD MY HATE FOR THIS WOMAN HAVE MADE ME--
--JUST LIKE HER?!
GOTTA SPLIT--GET SOMEWHERE AND THINK!!!
5

SOON, BACK IN COAST CITY...
NONE OF THIS MAKES ANY SENSE!
IF I HAVE HAL'S RING, THAT MEANS EITHER HE'S KAYOED OR DEAD.
THE RING'S WEAK-- CHARGE ALMOST GONE!
FAR AS I CAN TELL, HAL'S NOT EVEN ON THE PLANET! THE RING SEEMS TO INDICATE HE'S OUT IN SPACE SOMEWHERE!
POSSIBLY IN TROUBLE.
I SHOULD CARE, SHOULDN'T I?
STILL, I CAN'T STOP BLAMING HAL FOR KATMA'S DEATH--
WHAATT?!
HI, JOHN. WELCOME HOME!
CAROL'S... STAR SAPPHIRE'S VOICE!!
NOT SO DEAD AFTER ALL, HUH?
DEAD ENOUGH TO SEND YOU TO JAIL, JOHN. I NEVER DID LIKE YOU, YOU KNOW.
I LIKE THAT UNIFORM EVEN LESS.
HAL'S DEAD, JOHN. I KILLED HIM. I KNEW HE WOULD, WITH HIS LAST BREATH, SEND FOR YOU.
YOU CAN'T HELP HIM, JOHN.
AND, NO ONE CAN HELP YOU.
P-POWER BATTERY! GOTTA CHARGE THE RING OR I'M FINISHED!
THE... THE WHOLE BUILDING'S COMING DOWN--!!
OH... NO...
THAT... CHILD...
AN INNOCENT, DEAD AT THE HANDS OF A MADWOMAN.
KATMA--!
6

SOON, INSIDE A WASHINGTON, D.C. MORGUE...
A LITTLE RING-ZAP, AND THE NIGHT GUARD'S WATCHING ADDAMS FAMILY RERUNS.
THIS WAY, WE CAN CHAT PRIVATE-LIKE...
...CAROL.
I SHOULD KILL YOU. IF I KNEW HOW. I'D DO IT NOW.
THE WAY THINGS STAND, I'M GONNA DO TIME FOR YOUR MURDER ANYWAY.
WHY KATMA? WHY THE LITTLE GIRL?
BLAST IT, WOMAN-- WHY KILL INNOCENTS IF IT'S ME YOU WANT?
WHY?
JUST TO SEE THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE, JOHN!
THE GUARDIANS OF OA TOOK THE ZAMORANS -- MY PEOPLE -- AWAY!
SOMEONE'S GOT TO PAY FOR THIS, JOHN!
THE ZAMORANS AREN'T "YOUR PEOPLE." THEY JUST PICKED YOU AT RANDOM TO BE THEIR QUEEN!
YOU'RE JUST A STAND-IN FOR THE REAL THING!
GUESS THAT MAKES TWO OF US, EH, JOHN?
A CHILLING REALIZATION WASHES OVER JOHN STEWART.
HE'S GOT THE RING. HE'S GOT THE UNIFORM.
BUT, HE NOW REALIZES HE'S ONLY RENTING THEM FROM THEIR RIGHTFUL OWNER.
JUST A STAND-IN FOR THE REAL THING.
HE WANTS TO LASH OUT -- START A BLOODY, SLOBBERED FIREFIGHT THAT WOULD LAY WASTE TO THE U.S. CAPITAL AND COST THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS.
INSTEAD, HE JUST WALKS.
HA HA HA HA
7


STILL LATER, AT A COAST CITY CEMETERY...
HAL JORDAN'S NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR DEATH, KATMA...
HE WAS JUST A HANDY GUY TO BLAME.
STAR SAPPHIRE IS A THREAT TO EVERY LIVING CREATURE ON THE PLANET. SHE'S STILL WALKING AROUND, KATMA.
AND I HAVEN'T A CLUE AS TO HOW TO STOP HER.
HAL FOUGHT AND LOST. HE'S OUT IN SPACE SOMEWHERE, MAYBE BADLY HURT. MAYBE DEAD.
I SHOULD CARE.
I JUST CAN'T LET GO OF WHAT I'M FEELING, KAT.
I CAN'T SEE PAST MY PERSONAL HANG-UPS TO DO THE RIGHT THING.
AND THAT'S WHY I WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE A GREEN LANTERN!
THE RING'S FULLY CHARGED. I'VE COMMANDED IT TO RETURN TO HAL--- --WHEREVER HE IS--- WHAT?!
LIGHTS?!
JOHN STEWART-- YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!
ELSEWHERE:
THIS IS A BARREN, HOSTILE PLANETOID ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE.
6
THIS IS HAL JORDAN.
SOMETIME AGO HE WAS SOUNDLY BEATEN BY STAR SAPPHIRE.
IN A LAST, DESPERATE MOVE, HE SENT HIS POWER RING TO EARTH... TO JOHN STEWART.
HAL NEEDS HELP BADLY.
THWWAAAGGK!!
HE'S NOT GOING TO GET IT.
5
NEXT: GOLGOTHA!

# WILD DOG™

## "MORAL STAND"

# UNLEASHED!

Chapter Four

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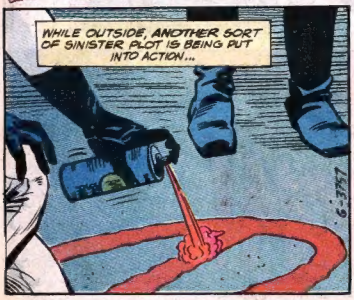
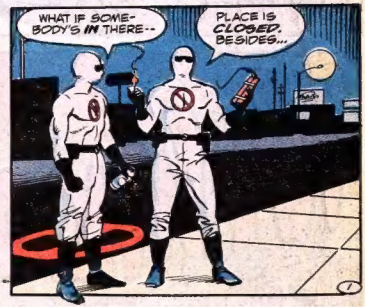
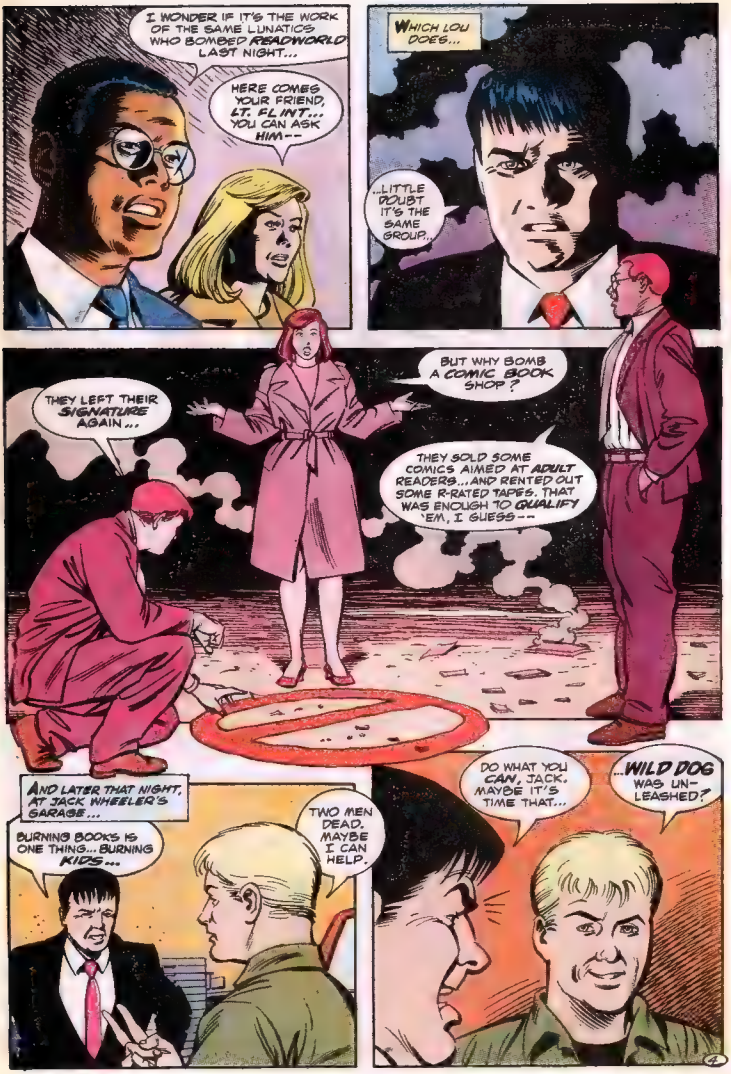
TERRY BEATTY PENCILLER / CO-CREATOR
MIKE GOLD EDITOR
MICHELE WOLFMAN COLORIST
GASPAR LETTERER
JOHN NYBERG INKER



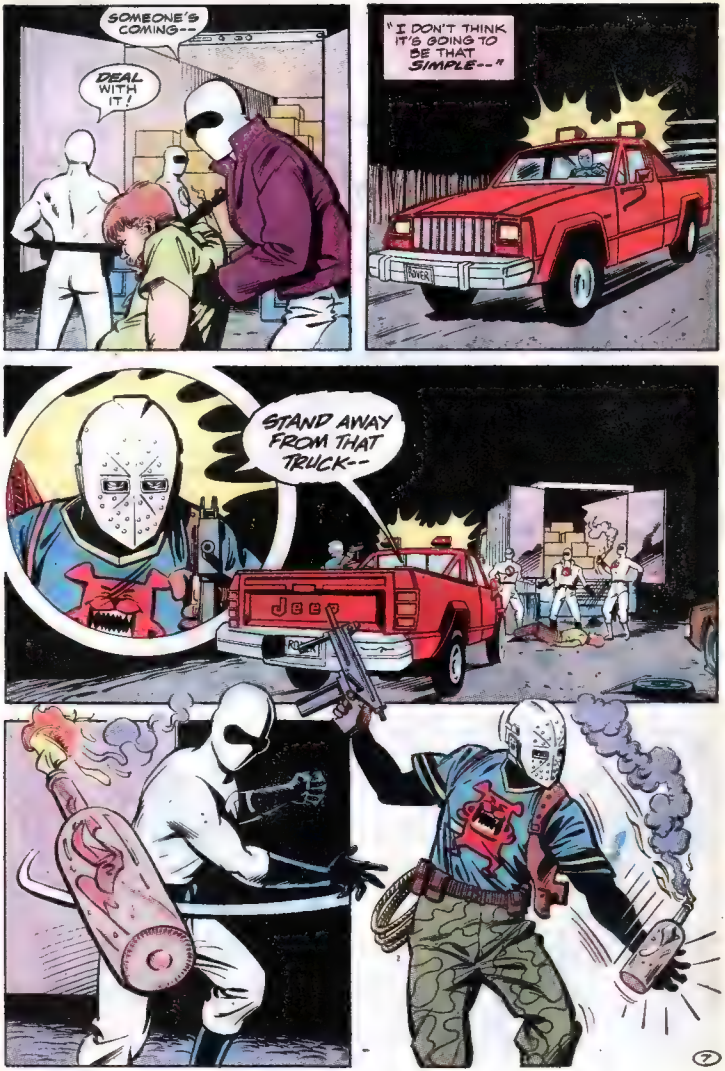
...SMUT MERCHANTS DESERVE WHAT THEY GET...
KRASH!!
BONE-CRUSH SPINE
DANGEROUS YOUTH
WHAT WAS THAT?
I DON'T KNOW... YOU GUYS DUCK OUT THE BACK-- I'LL GO CHECK IT OUT...
KA-WHOOOM!
time machine vacuum cleaner SHOP

AND ELSEWHERE IN THE CITIES...
JACK, YOUR INTEREST IN OUR CRUSADE IS MUCH APPRECIATED. YOU'LL BE HEARING FROM US.
I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT I CAN'T PLEDGE MY FINANCIAL SUPPORT TILL I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO JUDGE YOUR GROUP FROM WITHIN.
121
CERTAINLY, JACK, BUT I DOUBT YOU'LL FIND THE LEGION LACKING IN MORAL FIBER.
ANDY, I THINK I'M AS GOOD AS IN...
JACK, YOU MAY BE THE S.O.B.'S ALIBI!-- ANOTHER BOOKSTORE WAS JUST BOMBED...
"...I'M ON MY WAY THERE NOW."
IT'S HORRIBLE...
THE SHOP OWNER WAS KILLED, TWO TEENAGERS ARE IN INTENSIVE CARE... BADLY BURNED.
3


I WONDER IF IT'S THE WORK OF THE SAME LUNATICS WHO BOMBED READWORLD LAST NIGHT...
HERE COMES YOUR FRIEND, LT. FLINT... YOU CAN ASK HIM--
WHICH LOU DOES...
...LITTLE DOUBT IT'S THE SAME GROUP...
BUT WHY BOMB A COMIC BOOK SHOP?
THEY LEFT THEIR SIGNATURE AGAIN...
THEY SOLD SOME COMICS AIMED AT ADULT READERS...AND RENTED OUT SOME R-RATED TAPES. THAT WAS ENOUGH TO QUALIFY 'EM, I GUESS--
AND LATER THAT NIGHT, AT JACK WHEELER'S GARAGE...
BURNING BOOKS IS ONE THING...BURNING KIDS...
TWO MEN DEAD. MAYBE I CAN HELP.
DO WHAT YOU CAN, JACK. MAYBE IT'S TIME THAT...
...WILD DOG WAS UN-LEASHED?

AND, MUCH LATER THAT NIGHT...
POOR GUY... STUCK WITH TWO FLATS--
NEED A HAND, BUD?
HOPKINS
10-27
YES--YOURS, BOTH OF THEM... IN THE AIR.
WE'RE GOING TO WALK AROUND IN BACK OF YOUR RIG AND YOU'RE GOING TO OPEN IT UP.
5

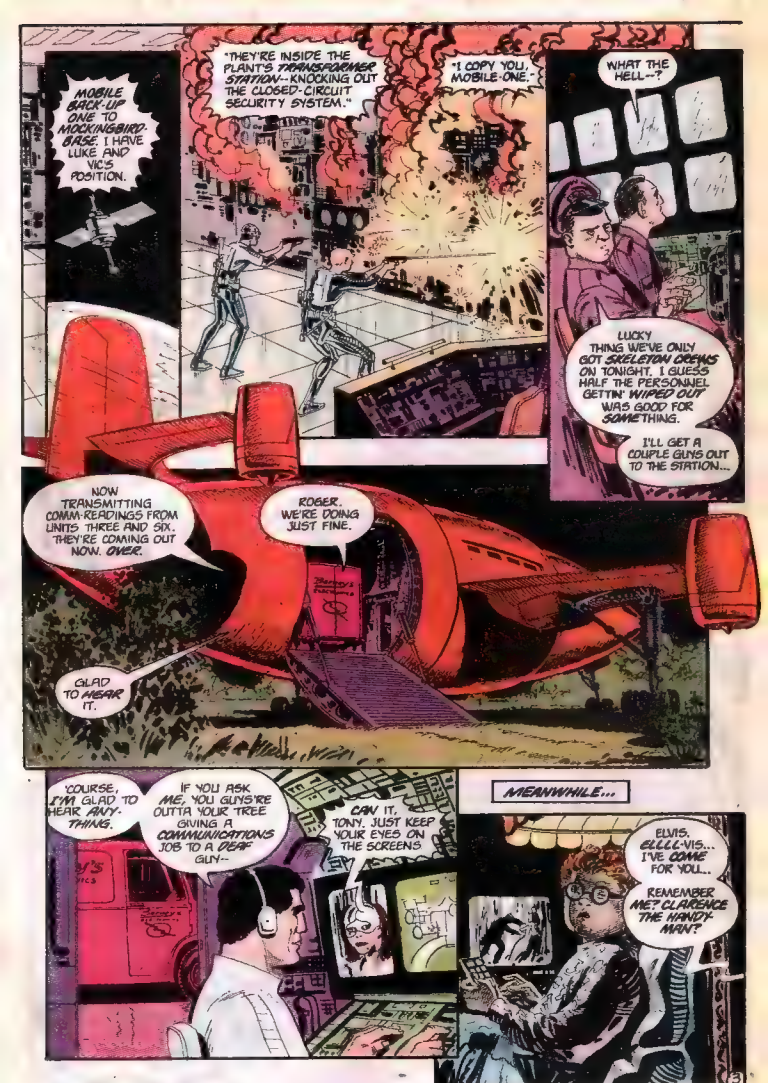
GUYS, I'M NOT CARRYING ANYTHING VALUABLE--
"JUST A BUNCH OF MAGAZINES--"
Photo World
Cosmopolitan
Playboy
FILTH!
HUH?
TORCH IT!
SWIMWEAR MONTHLY
MYSTERY DIGEST
FILM FOCUS
HEY NO WAY!
WHAP!


SOMEONE'S COMING--
DEAL WITH IT!
"I DON'T THINK IT'S GOING TO BE THAT SIMPLE--"
STAND AWAY FROM THAT TRUCK--
Jeep

KRASSH!
BLAM!
BLAM!
NEXT WEEK: SLEEPING DOGS LIE...

THE SECRET SIX!
HAUNTS OF THE VERY RICH
JUNE 24, 2:25 P.M. CENTRAL TIME. BROCKTON, KANSAS--THE ESTATE OF ELVIS BROCKMAN, C.E.O. OF BROCKMAN INDUSTRIES, THE PARENT COMPANY OF TECHNODYNE:
YOU WILL HANDLE THE INSTALLATION...?
ABSOLUTELY. IN FACT, I'M ALMOST FINISHED.
MR. BROCKMAN'S NEW COMPONENT STEREO SYSTEM WILL BE READY BY 3:00.
Barney's ELECTRONICS
WORDS BY MARTIN PASKO
PICTURES BY DAN SPIEGLE
LETTERS BY CARRIE SPIEGLE
COLORS BY CARL GAFFORD
EDITS BY DICK GIORDANO
G-3643
HE'S GONE.
UNIT THREE TO MOCKINGBIRD-BASE: WE'RE INSIDE.
MARIA, YOU SHOULD SEE THIS PLACE. IT'S INCREDIBLE--
SAVE IT FOR YOUR MEMOIRS.
JUST GET THE "GAG" SET UP AND KEEP THE CHATTER ON THIS FREQUENCY TO A MINIMUM.
I WANT ANOTHER CHECK-IN WHEN UNIT FOUR IS OUT. COMMAND SIGNING OFF.

3:03 P.M.:
UNIT SIX TO MOCKINGBIRD-BASE. THE STEREO SYSTEM'S SET UP. TONY'S ON HIS WAY OUT...
...AND WE'RE IN THE CLOSET.
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL PROBLEMS, SIX.
IS THE "GAG" READY TO GO?
AFFIRMATIVE
NOW WHAT?
GOOD. BROCKMAN SHOULD BE HEADING BACK FROM HIS BOARD MEETING RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
WE WAIT.
11:17 P.M. CENTRAL TIME. TYLERTOWN, KANSAS:
TECHNODYNE
A DIVISION OF BROCKMAN INDUSTRIES
TYLERTOWN PLANT
2


MOBILE BACK-UP ONE TO MOCKINGBIRD BASE. I HAVE LUKE AND VIC'S POSITION.
"THEY'RE INSIDE THE PLANT'S TRANSFORMER STATION--KNOCKING OUT THE CLOSED-CIRCUIT SECURITY SYSTEM."
"I COPY YOU, MOBILE-ONE."
WHAT THE HELL--?
LUCKY THING WE'VE ONLY GOT SKELETON CREWS ON TONIGHT. I GUESS HALF THE PERSONNEL GETTIN' WIPED OUT WAS GOOD FOR SOME THING.
I'LL GET A COUPLE GUYS OUT TO THE STATION...
NOW TRANSMITTING COMM-READINGS FROM UNITS THREE AND SIX. THEY'RE COMING OUT NOW. OVER.
ROGER. WE'RE DOING JUST FINE.
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
'COURSE, I'M GLAD TO HEAR ANY-THING.
IF YOU ASK ME, YOU GUYS'RE OUTTA YOUR TREE GIVING A COMMUNICATIONS JOB TO A DEAF GUY--
CAN IT, TONY. JUST KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SCREENS
MEANWHILE...
ELVIS. ELLLL-VIS... I'VE COME FOR YOU...
REMEMBER ME? CLARENCE THE HANDY-MAN?

AND YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SO VERY HANDY AT, DON'T YOU?--PUNISHING BAD LITTLE BOYS...
--AND YOU HAVE BEEN A BAD ONE, THE "SUPER-ACID RAIN" --YOUR COMPANY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT, WASN'T IT?
THIS...THIS IS SILLY. I--I'M HAVING A NIGHTMARE, THAT'S ALL--JUST LIKE IN THOSE MOVIES--
YOU CAN'T BE HERE--YOU'RE FAKE--YOU'RE JUST A CHARACTER IN THOSE MOVIES--!
OH, REALLY? WELL, IF I WASN'T REAL...
COULD I DO THIS?
MOCKINGBIRD-BASE TO ONE AND FIVE--
--SENSOR-RELAY FROM MOBILE BACK-UP ONE'S SHOWING A GUARD-DETAIL ON YOUR BACK--

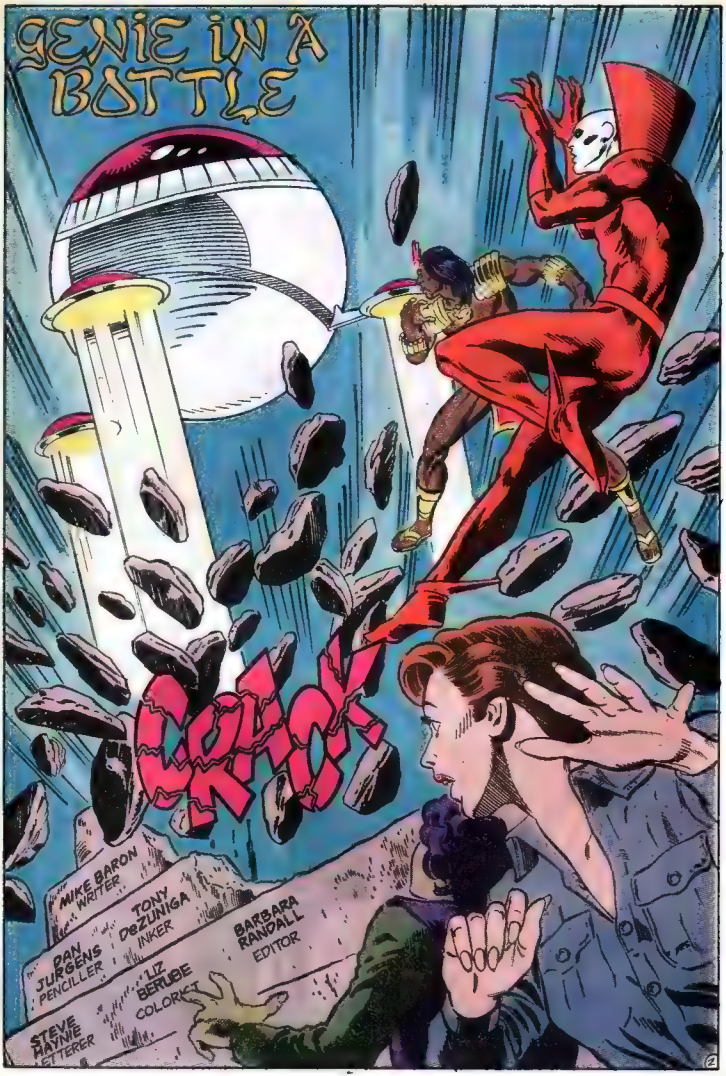
THEY'RE HISTORY, COMMAND!
A VERY SHORT HISTORY--
--THAT PROJECTILE-TASER FIRE WILL ONLY KEEP THEM STUNNED FOR AN HOUR. SO MOVE IT--
--YOU WANT THE R & D BUILDING ...75.6 METERS DEAD AHEAD
WE'RE ON OUR WAY
11:45 P.M.:
ADMIT IT-- YOU HAD YOUR PEOPLE FIGURE OUT A WAY TO CAUSE A HIGHLY CORROSIVE CHEMICAL TO RAIN ON THE TYLERTOWN AREA--
--DESTROYING MILLIONS IN PROPERTY AND TAKING HUNDREDS OF LIVES--
I--I DIDN'T WANNA KILL NOBODY! HONEST!
C'MON, ELVIS...WHAT'D YOU THINK WOULD HAPPEN?
I DUNNO... I JUST KNEW IT'D BE ON THE NEWS!
THEN, WHEN EVERYBODY SAW HOW THE IMPENETRITE SHIELDIN' ON OUR BUILDIN'S KEPT 'EM SAFE...
...THEY'D ALL WANT IMPENETRITE ON THEIR HOUSES AN' CARS AN' STUFF IN CASE THE ACID RAIN CAME AGAIN...!

GEEEE!
NOT GOOD ENOUGH, ELVIS. I WANT AN APOLOGY.
11:58 P.M. THE R&D BUILDING.
TONY.. MARIA... I BARELY PASSED BASIC CHEMISTRY...
...BUT EVEN I CAN FIGURE OUT THAT WE'VE FOUND ALL THE EVIDENCE WE NEED.
I'M TRANSMITTING IT NOW.
IT'S SOMETHING ABOUT A NEW FLUOROSULFURIC ACID SOLUTION THEY'VE DEVELOPED HERE--
THAT CAN PRODUCE PRECIPITATION WITH UP TO 85% LESS DILUTION THAN FOUND IN "NORMAL" ACID RAIN.
THANK YOU, LUKE. WE CAN READ, TOO.
"WE'VE GOT THE DATA--NOW JUST GET UP TO THE ROOF AND HELP VIC."
PRETTY CLEVER, HUH?
YEAH. I GUESS NOBODY'D EVER QUESTION THE SIGHT OF A DISH ANTENNA ON TOP OF AN INDUSTRIAL BUILDING.
OR RECOGNIZE THIS THING AS A LOW-INTENSITY LASER PROJECTOR.
BUT I STILL DON'T GET IT, EXACTLY
SIMPLE. IT DIRECTS HEAT--WITH PINPOINT ACCURACY--INTO THE AIR DIRECTLY UNDER THICK CLOUDS...

--AND WHEN THAT HOT, MOIST AIR FEEDS THE CLOUDS... VOILA: RAIN ON COMMAND.
GUYS-- LOOK OUT-- BEHIND YOU--!
NUMBER THREE TO MOCKINGBIRD. BASE--COME IN.
GO AHEAD, THREE.
IT'S A WRAP HERE. BROCKMAN'S OUT COLD-- FAINTED.
WHEN HE COMES TO, HE'LL PROBABLY WRITE THE WHOLE THING OFF AS SOME KIND OF HALLUCINATION--
12:33 A.M.
YOU'RE GONNA FIRE A LASER AT A CHEMICAL STORAGE TANK?
BUT WHY ELSE WOULD IT NOT LEAK CHEMICALS IF YOU SHOOT A HOLE IN IT?...
...UNLESS IT'S REALLY SOMETHING ELSE... DISGUISED AS A STORAGE TANK.
BUT WE'LL HAVE HIS WHOLE "CONFESSION" ON TAPE.
GOOD WORK, YOU TWO--NOW LET'S JUST GET YOU OUT OF THERE--FAST. THERE'S STILL A LOT MORE TO DO.
7

BUT WHAT IF YOU'RE WRONG?
SIMPLE. YOU DROP YOUR WEAPON, PUT YOUR HANDS TOGETHER, AND...
...PRAY LIKE HELL!
I THINK WE'VE JUST FOUND OUT HOW THEY GET THAT ACID INTO THE CLOUDS WITHOUT POLLUTING THE ENTIRE WATER TABLE...
THAT YOU HAVE...
...BUT I WOULDN'T GET MY HEART SET ON A SPOT ON THE MORNING NEWS, IF I WERE YOU...
10:36 P.M. PACIFIC TIME. THE ENCHANTED FOREST MAGIC CLUB IN CARMEL:
MR DI RIENZI... WAS YOUR FATHER ABOARD A PRIVATE AIRCRAFT SOMETIME WITHIN THE PAST WEEK?
OH MY GOD
I'M VERY SORRY, SIR, BUT THERE'S BEEN AN ACCIDENT.
THE CREW IS STILL RECOVERING THE VICTIMS' BODIES...
...AND WE CAN'T BE SURE YET THAT THERE ARE NO SURVIVORS, BUT I'M AFRAID IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.
WE FOUND THIS IN THE WRECKAGE...
PAPA!
NEXT: CONFLAGRATION

DEADMAN
RRRR


GENIE IN A BOTTLE
CLICK
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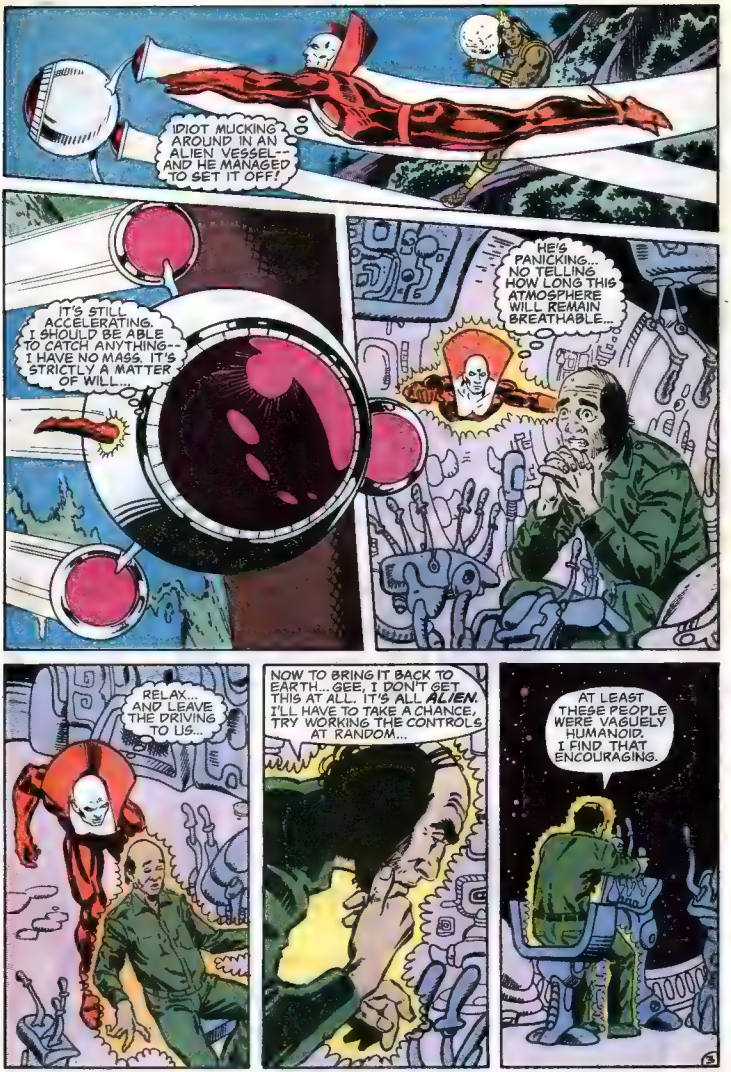
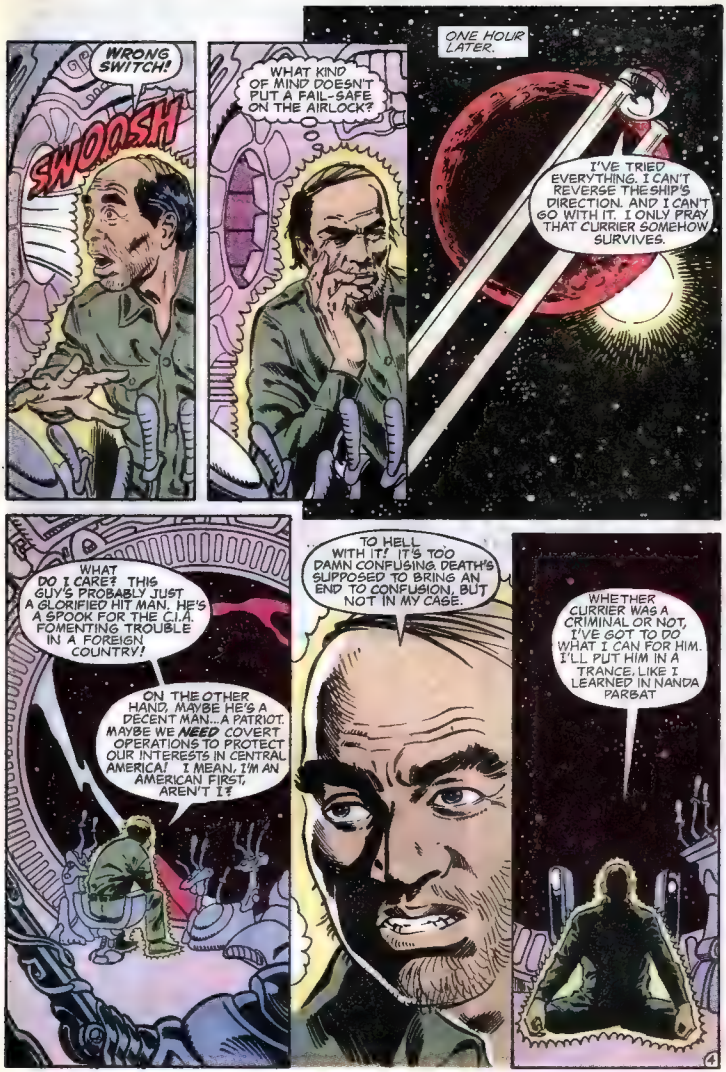
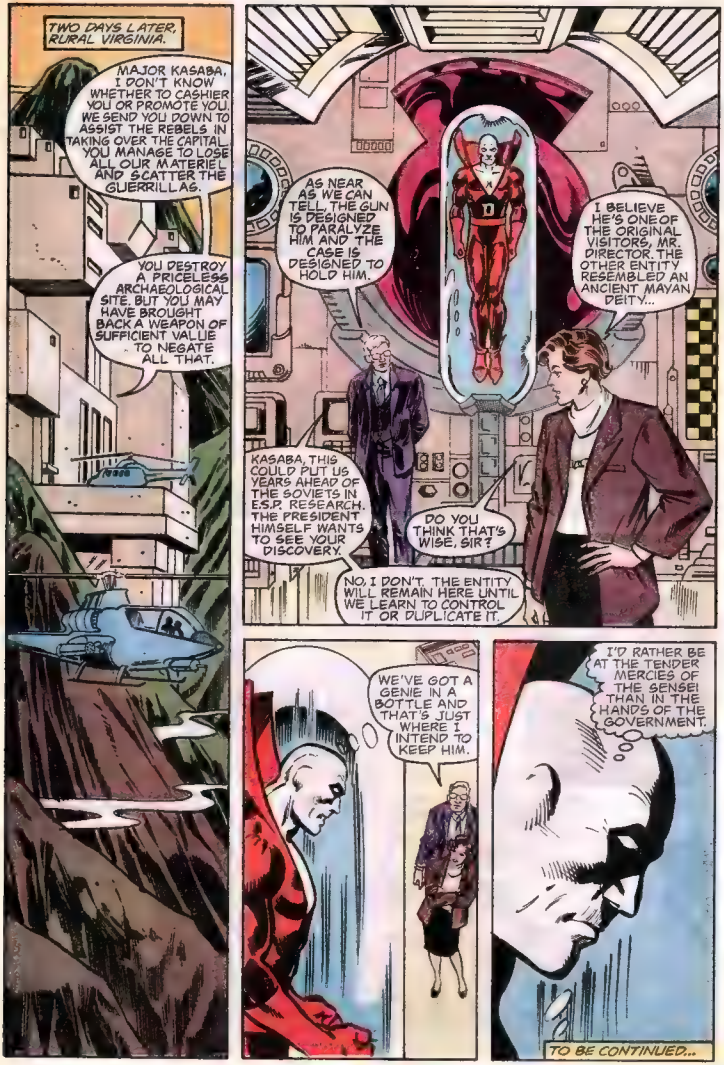

IDIOT MUCKING AROUND IN AN ALIEN VESSEL--AND HE MANAGED TO SET IT OFF!
IT'S STILL ACCELERATING. I SHOULD BE ABLE TO CATCH ANYTHING--I HAVE NO MASS. IT'S STRICTLY A MATTER OF WILL...
HE'S PANICKING... NO TELLING HOW LONG THIS ATMOSPHERE WILL REMAIN BREATHABLE...
RELAX... AND LEAVE THE DRIVING TO US...
NOW TO BRING IT BACK TO EARTH... GEE, I DON'T GET THIS AT ALL. IT'S ALL ALIEN. I'LL HAVE TO TAKE A CHANCE. TRY WORKING THE CONTROLS AT RANDOM...
AT LEAST THESE PEOPLE WERE VAGUELY HUMANOID. I FIND THAT ENCOURAGING.


WRONG SWITCH!
SWOOSH
WHAT KIND OF MIND DOESN'T PUT A FAIL-SAFE ON THE AIRLOCK?
ONE HOUR LATER.
I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING. I CAN'T REVERSE THE SHIP'S DIRECTION. AND I CAN'T GO WITH IT. I ONLY PRAY THAT CURRIER SOMEHOW SURVIVES.
WHAT DO I CARE? THIS GUY'S PROBABLY JUST A GLORIFIED HIT MAN. HE'S A SPOOK FOR THE C.I.A. FOMENTING TROUBLE IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY!
ON THE OTHER HAND, MAYBE HE'S A DECENT MAN... A PATRIOT. MAYBE WE NEED COVERT OPERATIONS TO PROTECT OUR INTERESTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA! I MEAN, I'M AN AMERICAN FIRST, AREN'T I?
TO HELL WITH IT! IT'S TOO DAMN CONFUSING. DEATH'S SUPPOSED TO BRING AN END TO CONFUSION, BUT NOT IN MY CASE.
WHETHER CURRIER WAS A CRIMINAL OR NOT, I'VE GOT TO DO WHAT I CAN FOR HIM. I'LL PUT HIM IN A TRANCE, LIKE I LEARNED IN NANDA PARBAT
4

I COULD RIDE THAT CRAFT FOREVER... MY CURIOSITY IS AS LARGE AS SPACE. BUT I MADE A PROMISE TO RAMA AND MUST RETURN TO EARTH.
TALAOC, GOD OF WAR!
HERE I AM, DEADMAN, GOD NO MORE. MY TEMPLE CRUSHED, MY BELIEVERS SCATTERED. I AM FADING AWAY. SOON I WILL BE NOTHING BUT A MEMORY.
I'M SORRY, TALAOC. I WAS JUST BEGINNING TO LIKE YOU.
SAVE YOUR PITY, DEADMAN. I'M THE LUCKY ONE. I NO LONGER HAVE TO CLING TO THIS MAD, DESTRUCTIVE WORLD.

MAJOR, THE RADIO'S GONE-- HALFTRACK'S GONE, THREE MEN DEAD, FOUR WOUNDED AND THE REST FLED INTO THE JUNGLE. WE CAN FORGET PROJECT CROSSBOW. WE'LL BE LUCKY IF WE PULL OUT BEFORE GOVERNMENT TROOPS PUT US ALL IN JAIL.
OPERATION CROSSBOW MAY BE A BUST, COMBS, BUT THIS MISSION IS A SUCCESS. DO YOU REALIZE WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED?
THESE ARE WEAPONS OF AN ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY! YOU SAW THAT SPACESHIP, LYING IN A PYRAMID FOR OVER 500 YEARS, AND IT STILL FLEW! IF JUST ONE OF THESE WEAPONS CHECKS OUT, IT'LL PUT US SO FAR AHEAD OF EVERYONE ELSE, IT WILL MAKE STAR WARS LOOK LIKE CHILDREN'S TOYS!
MAJOR KASABA! HAVE YOU LEARNED NOTHING FROM THIS DEVASTATION? YOU'VE DESTROYED FAR MORE THAN YOU'VE GAINED. I'LL SEE THAT YOU'RE PILLORIED FOR THIS!
PROFESSOR, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EXPERIMENT?
THE SPACESHIP WORKED--LET'S SEE IF THIS GUN WORKS TOO.
NO!
I'M SORRY, PROFESSOR, WE CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO GO FREE NOW.
WITH THE TEMPLE DESTROYED AND TALAOC GONE, ALL MY POWERS HAVE RETURNED.
6

MAJOR! WATCH WHERE YOU SWING THAT THING!
CAN'T CONTROL IT! SHE'S ALREADY PULLING THE TRIGGER--WEIRD ELECTRICAL ENERGY SURGING THROUGH MY BODY...
SPACK
HOLY--!! WHAT IS IT?!
IT'S THE ENTITY FROM THE PYRAMID! THESE WEAPONS CAN CONTROL HIM... QUICKLY! BRING UP THAT GLASS SARCOPHAGUS!
WHERE IS THE PROFESSOR?
HE ESCAPED INTO THE JUNGLE. DON'T WORRY--HE WON'T GET FAR. OUR MEN WILL HUNT HIM DOWN.
THEN LOAD OUR PRIZES ON THE PLANE AND LET'S GET OUT OF HERE. ONCE WE'VE LEARNED TO CONTROL OUR FRIEND IN THE BOX, WE CAN TAKE OVER ANY GOVERNMENT WE WISH.


TWO DAYS LATER, RURAL VIRGINIA.
MAJOR KASABA, I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO CASHIER YOU OR PROMOTE YOU. WE SEND YOU DOWN TO ASSIST THE REBELS IN TAKING OVER THE CAPITAL, YOU MANAGE TO LOSE ALL OUR MATERIEL AND SCATTER THE GUERRILLAS.
YOU DESTROY A PRICELESS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE. BUT YOU MAY HAVE BROUGHT BACK A WEAPON OF SUFFICIENT VALUE TO NEGATE ALL THAT.
AS NEAR AS WE CAN TELL, THE GUN IS DESIGNED TO PARALYZE HIM AND THE CASE IS DESIGNED TO HOLD HIM.
I BELIEVE HE'S ONE OF THE ORIGINAL VISITORS, MR. DIRECTOR. THE OTHER ENTITY RESEMBLED AN ANCIENT MAYAN DEITY...
KASABA, THIS COULD PUT US YEARS AHEAD OF THE SOVIETS IN E.S.P. RESEARCH. THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF WANTS TO SEE YOUR DISCOVERY.
DO YOU THINK THAT'S WISE, SIR?
NO, I DON'T. THE ENTITY WILL REMAIN HERE UNTIL WE LEARN TO CONTROL IT OR DUPLICATE IT.
WE'VE GOT A GENIE IN A BOTTLE AND THAT'S JUST WHERE I INTEND TO KEEP HIM.
I'D RATHER BE AT THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE SENSEI THAN IN THE HANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT.
TO BE CONTINUED...

# FOCUS

FOLLOWING THE CULT

In the theater, there are a few classic roles, famous character parts, that challenge an actor to do his very best. The list of these coveted roles is short: Oedipus, Cyrano, Lady Macbeth, Stanley Kowalski.

In comics there is but a handful of classic characters that are challenging in much the same way, inspiring creators to the height of their craft. No single character in the history of comics, however, has excited more creators than the Darknight Detective ... the Batman.

Since the dawning of Batman's "New Look" in 1964, a long and impressive list of writers and artists have applied their talents to the character's adventures: Gardner Fox, Carmine Infantino, Gil Kane, Frank Robbins, Denny O'Neil, Neal Adams, Dick Giordano, Archie Goodwin, Howard Chaykin, Michael Golden, Walt Simonson, Steve Englehart, Alan Davis, David Mazzucchelli ... and a guy named Frank Miller.

There are many qualities that make the Batman so compelling. He is a driven character of mystery and mood, a dark avenger of the night, but most interesting—and most important—he is a human being. Unlike most of his fellow costumed heroes, the Batman has no super-powers and has to rely instead on his wits, instinct, training ... *and* his humanity. It is this aspect that attracts most creators to the character, challenging them to portray the larger-than-life Dark Knight as well as the man within.

These observations are very much on the minds of the two most recent creators to try on the cape and cowl, Jim Starlin and Bernie Wrightson, the collaborators on the upcoming Batman Prestige Format series—THE CULT.

Neither creator is a stranger to comics, having both enjoyed long successful careers in the medium. Starlin and Wrightson both emerged from comics' first talent boom of the late 1960s and early 1970s to be among the first modern superstars of comics.

Jim Starlin first drew attention as the artist (and, later, as the artist/writer) of Marvel's *Captain Marvel* series, where he took the floundering science fiction super-hero and introduced his own brand of cosmic space opera to highly successful effect.

He next applied his well-honed talent for the cosmic to *Warlock*, bringing a grand star-spanning adventure, the likes of which the medium had seldom seen.

Starlin's skills as a writer and artist have been visible on many major characters, for several publishers, over the last fifteen years. He has also pioneered several comic book forms that have since become institutions. An early proponent of independent comics and contributing to Mike Friedrich's *Star*Reach* magazine, Starlin also helped popularize the graphic novel with *Death of Captain Marvel* and the multi-part (and multi-publisher) *Metamorphosis Saga*, which led directly into his highly successful, long-running *Dreadstar* series.

Where large-scale science fiction has been Starlin's forte, Berni Wrightson has made his mark in the more earth-bound genres of mystery and horror. Some of Wrightson's earliest work appeared in DC's SHOWCASE, where he drew the last two episodes of Nightmaster, a costumed sword-and-sorcery character created by Denny O'Neil and artist Jerry Grandenetti. Very quickly his talents for the macabre made Wrightson a semi-regular fixture in DC's mystery (read: horror) comics, HOUSE OF MYSTERY and HOUSE OF SECRETS.

This type of work proved perfect for EC comics fan Wrightson, who soon specialized in short horror stories, appearing in many publications including a little known, short-lived, black and white magazine called *Web of Horror*, which Wrightson helped edit and publish.

Wrightson's interest in and talent for the horrific led to his profusely illustrated edition of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and to collaborating with famed horror writer Stephen King on *Creepshow*, an adaptation of the King movie of the same name, and *Cycle of the Werewolf*, which was transformed into a film entitled *Silver Bullet*, which had nothing to do with light beer despite the appearance of actor Gary Busey.

With such a long list of accomplishments, Wrightson is probably still best known for his creation, with writer Len Wein, of DC's SWAMP THING. It was in the seventh issue of that classic series that Wrightson had his first crack at the Batman.

Starlin and Wrightson have collaborated on several projects over the past couple of years, most recently on the DC mini-series THE WEIRD. Now the two are combining talents once again, this time to examine new angles on the classic figure of Gotham's grim guardian.

The two creators admit a long-standing fondness for the Batman that is based largely on his human and thus more identifiable nature. Wrightson recalls relating more to the character than to others because "if you worked at it, you could grow up to be the Batman, but there was no way you could ever grow up to be Superman," a sentiment that Starlin shares. "You'd have to be obsessed, and a little crazy, but you *could* be him."

The two share a vision of the Batman that returns him to his status of avenging crimefighter.

Wrightson cites Frank Miller's DARK KNIGHT as responsible for rekindling his interest in the Batman. In that ground-breaking work, Wrightson found a view of the character similar to his own.

"I see the guy as a driven, no-nonsense vigilante—almost a Dirty Harry in

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a cape," Wrightson said, "out to clean up Gotham City in his own way."

Starlin has recently become the regular writer on the monthly BATMAN title and welcomes the opportunity to do grittier, more realistic stories than he has been know for. "I've been reading a lot of mysteries of late by writers like Elmore Leonard, John D. MacDonald ... guys like that," Starlin relates, "and I've become interested in doing those kinds of stories."

Starlin observes that doing BATMAN allows him to write "the closest thing we have to crime comics today. [Batman] is more a mystery character than a super-hero."

THE CULT is the logical extension of the creators' shared vision. The three-volume series contrasts the Batman with Deacon Blackfire, a character who takes Batman's oath to rid Gotham of criminals, to very grisly extremes.

The charismatic Deacon forms an army—or cult—of Gotham's homeless within the bowels of the city and sends them out to brutally dispatch the criminal element. Blackfire, whose origin may stretch back to the origins of Gotham itself, is equally determined to have the Batman join the cult as an active participant in the bloodshed.

The story opens with a nightmare of retribution and never loses that feeling, even after the dreamer—Bruce Wayne—has awakened.

"THE CULT is a horror story," says Starlin, "but in a very human sense.... You're not going to see any vampires or anything, but it's a very frightening story."

Obviously, the story is anything but a light romp. "It's very black," explains Starlin, "which was my goal. I want to

remind everyone of their mortality ... of the very ephemeral nature of their lives.

"THE CULT," Starlin concludes, "is simply the scariest Batman story *ever*."

Considering the horrific nature of the story, Berni Wrightson was the most logical artist to draw it. His mood-drenched approach to the material makes it perfect casting.

"Berni is doing the best work of his career," states the writer. "He's managed to surprise even me. There are sequences and images that will chill your blood!"

Wrightson modestly agrees that he's doing his best work to date but demures, "I only know of one way to draw. It's not up to me to say if it's moodier, or better than what's been done with the Batman before, I'm just doing my best and having a good time."

Starlin, the writer who also happens to be an artist, admits that working with another artist takes some getting used to.

"When I'm writing a story, I have very definite images in mind," he said, "and that is almost always different than what comes back from the artist

"Berni puts his own macabre twist on the story, and *those* differences are almost always improvements."

THE CULT takes place solidly within the continuity of the ongoing BATMAN series and will resonate in the upcoming stories.

"There are some major changes coming up that will come out of things we set up in THE CULT," Starlin teases.

THE CULT promises to be a major event, and with blood-chilling art and the scariest Batman story ever, Jim Starlin and Berni Wrightson are sure to deliver on that promise .. dramatically.

Follow ... THE CULT!

—Brian Augustyn

NEXT WEEK ... the fifth chapters of each of our storylines, fronted by a Deadman cover by Adam & Andy Kubert See you in seven!

## ★ ★ ★ ★ VOTE ★ ★ ★ ★

Just as soon as you've finished this issue of ACTION COMICS WEEKLY, write us a letter or a postcard and rank this issue's stories in order of preference: the one you like the most first, the one you liked second second and so on. Each week, we'll tally the vote and print the results right here in our letter column. Your opinion counts, so VOTE!

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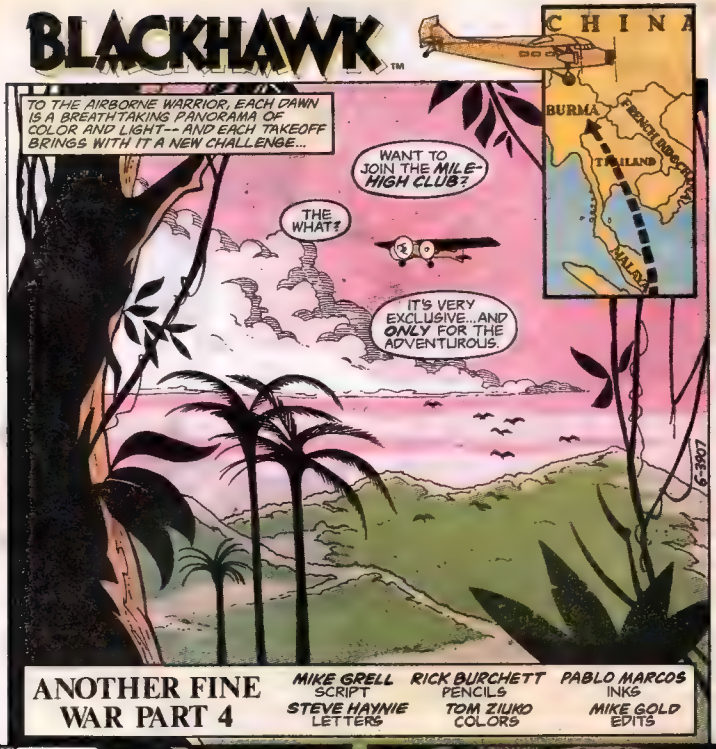
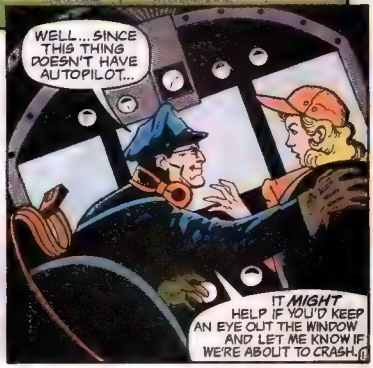



## ANOTHER FINE WAR PART 4

MIKE GRELL — SCRIPT
RICK BURCHETT — PENCILS
PABLO MARCOS — INKS
STEVE HAYNIE — LETTERS
TOM ZIUKO — COLORS
MIKE GOLD — EDITS

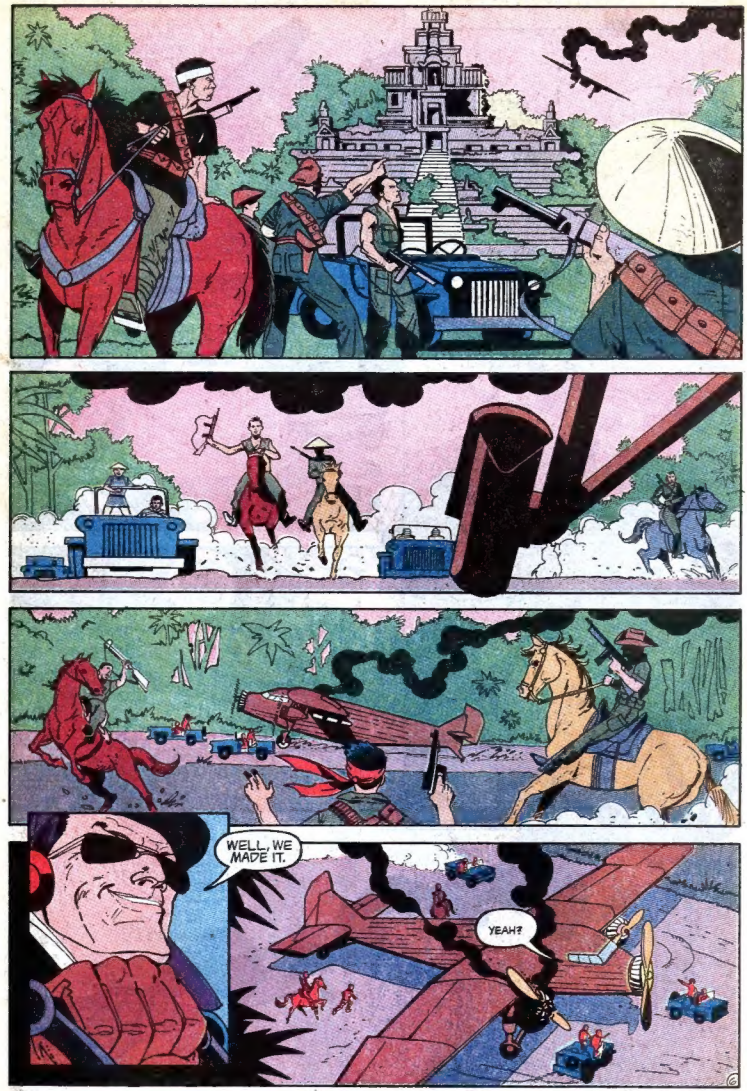


GET OFF ME!
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN HAVING YOU SLOBBER ON ME.
HARD TO GET, EH? I LIKE THAT IN A WOMAN... UP TO A POINT...
I HIRED YOU TO FLY THIS PLANE-- THAT'S ALL.
YOU DIDN'T EXACTLY HIRE ME...
...IT'S MORE OF A PARTNERSHIP, REMEMBER? SOMETHING ABOUT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN GOLD, AND FINDERS KEEPERS.
I'LL SEE TO IT YOU GET YOUR FAIR SHARE, MR. PROHASKA.
I KEEP MY WORD... I HOPE YOU CAN SAY THE SAME.
LOOK, LADY, YOU'VE GOT ONE ADVANTAGE HERE...YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE DEALING WITH.
I'VE BEEN A LOT OF PLACES AND I'VE DONE A LOT OF THINGS. YOU CAN ASK ABOUT ME AT ANY AIRFIELD IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND YOU'LL HEAR THE SAME STORIES. HELL, SOME OF THEM ARE EVEN TRUE.
IF THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, I CAN TURN THIS THING AROUND AND TAKE YOU BACK TO SINGAPORE.

OKAY, I WAS A JERK. I APOLOGIZE.
BUT LET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT--
--YOU GOT A LOT OF CLOUT WHERE IT COMES FROM, I DON'T KNOW.. AND I DON'T WANT TO KNOW.
BUT IF YOU EXPECT ME TO TRUST YOU, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO RETURN THE FAVOR. OTHERWISE, WE'LL NEVER GET IN AND OUT OF THAT BANDIT CAMP IN ONE PIECE.
OKAY. TRUCE?
TRUCE.
HOW WILL YOU DO IT?
QUITE SIMPLE, MY CHILD. IT'S ALL A MATTER OF STEEL NERVES, SPLIT-SECOND TIMING..
...AND A FRIEND OF MINE IN SAIGON.
3

MONSIEUR BLANC-DUMONT! WHAT SHOULD A GIRL SAY TO SUCH A PROPOSAL?
SHE SHOULD SAY YES.
I THINK I SHOULD SAY PERHAPS.
PERHAPS?
YES.
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
YES, YES! WHAT IS IT?
I'VE GOT A MESSAGE FOR MR. ANDRÉ BLANC-DU SOMETHING OR OTHER...YOU HIM?
ANDRÉ... CHÉRIE...
I THINK PERHAPS... I WILL SAY YES.
SLAM

DO YOU HAVE TO FLY SO LOW?
BOOTLEGGERS AND SMUGGLERS DON'T FLY AT HIGH ALTITUDES, WHERE THEY CAN BE PICKED UP ON RADAR..
...AND THIS BASE WASN'T BUILT IN A PLACE WHERE IT CAN BE SPOTTED EASILY.
SEE WHAT I MEAN? THERE IT IS.
WILL THEY LET US LAND?
THEY WILL IF WE HAVE A GOOD REASON ...I HOPE.
PULL THAT LEVER, HARD
IT'S A LITTLE GIMMICK I HAD INSTALLED-- PUMPS OIL STRAIGHT INTO THE STARBOARD ENGINE.


WELL, WE MADE IT.
YEAH?

C'MON. OUR PUBLIC WAITS.
ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING?
NOT REALLY.
HI! I WAS WONDERING IF YOU GOULD--!
WELL, WE'RE IN.
I NOTICED.
THAT'S HIM. MASSIE.
SO WE HAVE VISITORS.
I KNOW YOU FROM SOMEWHERE, MA PETITE, DO I NOT? SURELY WE HAVE MET.
I DOUBT IT.
I THINK YOU ARE MISTAKEN.
I NEVER FORGET A BREAST.
≥GAK!≤
7

CONTINUED
NEXT WEEK!

SUPERMAN®

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

# "FINAL ESCAPE?"

ROGER STERN - WRITER
CURT SWAN - PENCILLER
JOHN BEATTY - INKER
BILL OAKLEY - LETTERER
TOM ZILKO - COLORER
MIKE CARLIN - EDITOR

IN PURSUING THE LAST OF A TRIO OF GUNMEN, THE MAN OF STEEL HAS DISCOVERED HIS QUARRY'S BODY, DUMPED BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...

WHOEVER KILLED HIM CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR... THEY WON'T ESCAPE ME!

DIDJA SEE THE LOOK ON SUPERMAN'S FACE?

YEAH. I WONDER WHO HE'S AFTER?

I DUNNO-- BUT I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE IN THAT GUY'S SHOES!

SEVERAL MILES AWAY...

IT'S ALL FALLING APART. I DON'T UNDERSTAND... THIS SHOULD HAVE BEEN SUCH A SIMPLE OPERATION...

...ALL WE HAD TO DO WAS INTERCEPT AND ELIMINATE ONE OF THE FELLOWSHIP'S IDIOT COURIERS BEFORE HE COULD DELIVER HIS MESSAGE.

I NEVER SHOULD HAVE HIRED COMMON CRIMINALS-- I SHOULD HAVE DONE THE JOB MYSELF... ALONE! I'M SURE I COULD HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT...

...ATTRACTING ...ATTENTION.

NO! OH ...NO!!

KRAANG

I DON'T LIKE LAW-BREAKERS IN GENERAL-- ESPECIALLY IN MY TOWN--

--BUT I HAVE A PARTICULAR DISTASTE FOR KILLERS! DON'T MAKE ME DO SOMETHING I'LL REGRET!

I MUSTN'T BE ARRESTED. MY SUPERIORS MUST NOT BE COMPROMISED!

ONLY ONE ALTERNATIVE--!

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK!